

ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHAPEL

LENTEN ORGAN MEDITATIONS MUSIC, SILENCE, AND LIGHT

“There Will Be Rest” Sara Teasdale

There will be rest, and sure stars shining
 Over the roof-tops crowned with snow,
A reign of rest, serene forgetting,
 The music of stillness holy and low.



I will make this world of my devising
 Out of a dream in my lonely mind.
I shall find the crystal of peace, -above me
 Stars I shall find.

Charles Houmard, *Organist*
March 7, 4:00 PM
St. Mark's Chapel

Opening Prayer

Ner Tamid (Eternal Flame)

Hayim Nahman Bialik and Linda Pastan, loosely adapted

Think of one who has a harp
and a lithe, quivering soul:
the poet in him or her will speak
the heart's sequestered archive.
Yet as the hand strikes every chord,
one secret remains hidden.
However much the fingers dance,
one string is mute, keeping silent.

The sun has dropped.
The line of light at the horizon,
the hinge between earth
and heaven, is only there
a moment, and then
a seemingly lesser light
quivers into being.

Tonight, you are invited to dwell silently in the music of hymns selected to resonate with our deep desires for connection to the divinity of God, the Son, the Holy Spirit; to each other; and to ourselves—our fears, desires, sorrows, and joys. Rumi has written that a candle is “nothing but a tongue of light/describing a refuge.” In the candlelight of this refuge here at St. Marks, take time to see one another, beyond the masks we wear, and listen for the sound of God’s grace. May you walk peacefully and joyously in and of God’s great creation. - Anne Flammang

* A hymn tune is a melody that is often paired with one or more texts. This pairing of texts to one melody facilitates the ease of congregational singing. Naming hymn tunes dates back centuries and is derived from a variety of sources. Some hymn tunes are closely linked with one text, such as New Britain and “Amazing Grace.” Other hymn tunes have several related texts, such as Slane, most often sung to “Be Thou My Vision.” Carl Daw, a prior rector at St. Mark’s Chapel, was highly regarded for writing hymn texts that he paired with well-known hymn tunes. - Charles Houmard

Christ, by Whose All-saving Light. BWV 620

Christ, by Whose all-saving Light
Mankind benefited,
Was for Sinners in the Night
As a Thief committed.
Dragged before a wicked Court
Of the Jewish Clergy;
Where they tried their worst Effort
'Gainst the Lord of Mercy.

Grant, O Jesu, blessed Lord,
By Thy Cross and Passion,
Thy blest Love may be adored
By the whole Creation:
Hating Sin, the woeful Cause
Of Thy Death and Suffering,
Give our Heart to obey Thy Laws
As the best Thanks-offering.

Bach chose truth over beauty, as depicted by the jarring and frightening power of this chorale prelude. The chorale is presented in canon between the soprano and bass. We are fenced in and forced to face our own ugliness and violence as the alto and tenor combat each other with a newly composed melody filled with dissonance, also in canon.

When on the Cross the Savior Stood. BWV 621

When Jesus on the Cross was found,
His Body pierced with many a Wound,
With Torture very bitter;
The dying Words, which He then spake,
With a still Heart consider.

He who God's Pains in Honour has,
To whom our Saviour gives the Grace
To be in Heart possessing
And weigh these seven Gospel Words,
Enjoys a noble Blessing.

Deep listening reveals Bach's understanding of chorale texts that take us to places that we did not intend to go. This chorale prelude presents the mournful melody in the soprano, yet it is the rhythmic and melodic

symbolism of the alto, tenor and bass that unsettles the listener. Bach seeks to depict Christ's true suffering on the cross. We hear each weakening breath as the ever-descending scales attempt to rise again, only to plummet further over a syncopated pedal that provides weakness rather than strength.

***Abbots Leigh (City of God)**

"Song of Myself, 26" by Walt Whitman

Now I will do nothing but listen,
To accrue what I hear into this song, to let sounds contribute toward it.

I hear bravuras of birds, bustle of growing wheat, gossip of flames,
clack of sticks cooking my meals,
I hear the sound I love, the sound of the human voice,
I hear all sounds running together, combined, fused or following,
Sounds of the city and sounds out of the city, sounds of the day and night,
Talkative young ones to those that like them, the loud laugh of work-
people at their meals,
The angry base of disjointed friendship, the faint tones of the sick,
The judge with hands tight to the desk, his pallid lips pronouncing a
death-sentence,
The heave'e'yo of stevedores unlading ships by the wharves, the refrain of
the anchor-lifters,
The ring of alarm-bells, the cry of fire, the whirr of swift-streaking
engines and hose-carts with premonitory tinkles and color'd lights,
The steam-whistle, the solid roll of the train of approaching cars,
The slow march play'd at the head of the association marching two and
two,
(They go to guard some corpse, the flag-tops are draped with black
muslin.)

I hear the violoncello, ('tis the young man's heart's complaint),
I hear the key'd cornet, it glides quickly in through my ears,
It shakes mad-sweet pangs through my belly and breast.
I hear the chorus, it is a grand opera,
Ah this indeed is music—this suits me.
A tenor large and fresh as the creation fills me,
The orbic flex of his mouth is pouring and filling me full.

I hear the train'd soprano (what work with hers is this?)
The orchestra whirls me wider than Uranus flies,

It wrenches such ardors from me I did not know I possess'd them,
It sails me, I dab with bare feet, they are lick'd by the indolent waves,
I am cut by bitter and angry hail, I lose my breath,
Steep'd amid honey'd morphine, my windpipe throttled in fakes of death,
At length let up again to feel the puzzle of puzzles,
And that we call Being.

***Repton (Silence, Peace)**

“The Lake Isle of Innisfree” by William Butler Yeats

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made:
Nine bean-rows will I have there, a hive for the honey-bee;
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.
And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.
I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements grey,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

“Lovers on a Park Bench” by Samuel M. Johnson (from *Einstein on the Beach*, Philip Glass)

The day with its cares and perplexities is ended and the night is now upon us. The night should be a time of peace and tranquility, a time to relax and be calm. We have need of a soothing story to banish the disturbing thoughts of the day, to set at rest our troubled minds, and put at ease our ruffled spirits.

And what sort of story shall we hear? Ah, it will be a familiar story, a story that is so very, very old, and yet it is so new. It is the old, old story of love. Two lovers sat on a park bench, with their bodies touching each other, holding hands in the moonlight.

There was silence between them. So profound was their love for each other, they needed no words to express it. And so, they sat in silence, on a park bench, with their bodies touching, holding hands in the moonlight.

Finally, she spoke. “Do you love me, John?” she asked. “You know I love you, darling,” he replied. “I love you more than tongue can tell. You are the light of my life, my sun, moon and stars. You are my everything. Without you I have no reason for being.”

Again, there was silence as the two lovers sat on a park bench, their bodies touching, holding hands in the moonlight. Once more she spoke. "How much do you love me, John?" she asked. He answered: "How much do I love you? Count the stars in the sky. Measure the waters of the oceans with a teaspoon. Number the grains of sand on the sea shore. Impossible, you say."

"Yes, and it is just as impossible for me to say how much I love you."

"My love for you is higher than the heavens, deeper than Hades, and broader than the earth. It has no limits, no bounds. Everything must have an ending except my love for you."

There was more of silence as the two lovers sat on a park bench with their bodies touching, holding hands in the moonlight.

Once more her voice was heard. "Kiss me, John," she implored. And leaning over, he pressed his lips warmly to hers in fervent osculation.

Our Father Who Art in Heaven. BWV 636

Our Father in the heaven Who art,
Who tellest all of us in heart
Brothers to be, and on Thee call,
And wilt have prayer from us all,
Grant that the mouth not only pray,
From deepest heart oh help its way.

Amen, that is, let this come true!
Strengthen our faith ever anew,
That we may never be in doubt
Of that we here have prayed about.
In Thy name, trusting in Thy word.
We say a soft Amen, O Lord.

Martin Luther's paraphrase of "The Lord's Prayer" personalizes the text for the Lutheran liturgy in a direct and intimate manner. Bach's setting of the chorale melody is direct and unadorned, yet profoundly mystical. The melody in the soprano is accompanied by the lower three voices exchanging a four-note motive that symbolizes the four points of the cross i.e., two vertical notes and two horizontal notes.

Meditations selected by Mary Jo Tryba and Anne Flammang

Upcoming Lenten Organ Meditation:
March 14th at 4 PM

